



Press Release  
Embassy of the United States  
Tripoli, Libya  
April 2, 2009

## **Ambassador Gene A. Cretz Opens the U.S. Visa Section to the Libyan Public, Announces Visa Services**

Ambassador Gene A. Cretz welcomed Libyan dignitaries to the Embassy of the United States on April 2, 2009 to announce the opening of the Visa Section to the Libyan public. Libyan citizens will no longer have to travel to Tunis for consular services. All visa applicants are welcome to complete an on-line application and make an appointment on our website at [www.libya.usembassy.gov](http://www.libya.usembassy.gov).

The Ambassador said the opening of visa services to the Libyan public was a tangible and important symbol of the U.S. commitment to deepening American-Libyan commercial, educational, and cultural ties. "Our doors are open for business, study, and travel... I will strive to support the growing bonds between Americans and Libyans, private and public," he said.

"I look forward to hearing stories of another Libyan student, another businesswoman, another athlete, another artist, another diplomat, and another tourist from Libya crossing the Atlantic and feeling welcome on American shores. We invite the Libyan people to visit our nation, and their visits will help us make sure that the ties between us become more profound and long-lasting. At the same time, we look forward to American businessmen, students, academics, and tourists also crossing the Atlantic to experience the people and culture of this great country as well."

Good afternoon. Esteemed Members of the Government of Libya, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As the first American Ambassador to Libya in 36 years, I have the privilege of continuing the process of normalizing relations with the Libyan government, and creating new ties with the Libyan people.

To this end, I am very pleased to celebrate the opening of United States' Visa Services to the Libyan public. This is a tangible and important symbol of the commitment of the United States to establish a normal relationship with Libya and with its people. No longer will Libyan citizens have to travel to Tunis to gain access to American consular services.

With this step, we are sending the message to the Libyan people: Our doors are open for business, study, and travel.

I look forward to hearing stories of another Libyan student, another businesswoman, another athlete, another artist, another diplomat, and another tourist from Libya crossing the Atlantic and feeling welcome on American shores. I am confident that the Libyan Government will take a similar step so that we also see more American businesspeople, students, academics, and tourists here in Libya as well.

We invite the Libyan people to visit our nation, and their visits will help make sure that the ties between us become more profound and long-lasting. That goal will be easier when Americans also come here to see this great nation, its people, and its culture.

Thank you.